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SUBJECT: PORTUGAL UNLIKELY TO INCREASE ISAF CONTRIBUTIONS

REF: STATE 71547

¶1. (U) Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials agreed to review the reftel request to increase contributions to ISAF, but noted they did not expect the review to bring about any changes to current contribution levels. Portugal is operating, they stated, under an austerity budget. Moreover, Portugal will assume the European Union presidency on July 1, with the additional expenditures that go with that duty. Nonetheless, interlocutors stress that Portugal remains committed to keeping its commando company in Afghanistan -- without caveats -- through at least February ¶2008.

¶2. (SBU) Ministry of Defense colleagues also agreed to consider the reftel request. Without making any promises, they speculated that they might be able to contribute some armored personnel carriers (M113) and uniforms, but noted the need to investigate the possibility further. (Note: the APCs in question are in need of renovation and no funds have yet been allocated to cover the costs of that activity, transport to Afghanistan, or of any further operations. End note.)
Hoffman